

WASHINGTON, DC-Tomorrow, Tuesday, March 12, Congressman Earl Blumenauer will introduce the Polar Bear Protection Act making it illegal to use polar bears in traveling shows or circuses. The bill has over 30 original cosponsors. Currently, there is one circus, the Suarez Brothers Circus in Puerto Rico, which has six polar bears on display as their prime circus attraction. These bears are being abused and kept captive in conditions that do not meet the basic requirements of animal cruelty laws.

Over 70 members of the U.S. House and Senate have signed letters stating that they support immediate action regarding these bears, including confiscating them to improve their quality of life. Several zoos in the U.S. have offered to house the bears and one bear was recently rescued from the circus by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and placed at a zoo in Baltimore, Maryland.

Who: Congressman Earl Blumenauer (D-OR); Resident Commissioner Aníbal Acevedo-Vilá (D-PR); Ron Kagan, Executive Director of the Detroit Zoo, which has the nation's premier arctic mammal exhibit with seven polar bears; Wayne Pacelle, Senior VP for the Humane Society of the U.S.; Original Cosponsors of the Polar Bear Protection Act

What: Press Conference on Polar Bear Protection Act and the treatment of polar bears in a circus in Puerto Rico

Where: House Triangle, U.S. Capitol, Washington, DC

When: Tuesday, March 12, 2002 at 3:00 PM

B-Roll will be available of the polar bears in the circus in Puerto Rico

Rain Location: 441 Cannon House Office Building